

WILSON BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

The Ex-Commissioner on the Stand and Answers Under Protest Questions Propounded.

FOR A REDUCTION OF RATES.

The Various Railroads are Cited to Appear Before the Commission to Show Cause Why Rates Should not be Reduced—Fertilizer Rates Cut One-Sixth—Also Cotton Rates—A Working Body in the Railroad Commission.

The Railroad Commission met last Thursday in pursuance to the call of Chairman Caldwell. The Commission continued the investigation of discriminations by railroads and express companies. Mr. S. O. Wilson was the first witness to be examined. Chairman Caldwell propounded the following question:

"Mr. Wilson, state whether or not, since the 1st day of January, 1898, you have used a pass over any railroad within the State."

"By your permission I would like to state, with due deference to the Commission and court, that owing to the litigation between yourself and myself, I shall answer this question, but under protest."

"I want to assure you that it is not the purpose of the Commission to use any of this testimony against you," said Chairman Caldwell.

"If you will pardon me, it might be so, but I shall proceed to answer the question," replied Mr. Wilson.

"As far as this court is concerned we shall not take any advantage of any answer given."

"I would state, however, that as a newspaper publisher, publishing schedules, I get transportation in exchange for advertising in my paper, some of which I have had occasion to use, some I have not."

"State then whether since the first day of January, 1898, you have used free transportation over the Southern Railway or any other line within the State because of the fact that you advertise for them?"

"I have. Will please designate the lines?"

"The only one I have received up to date is over the Southern. The Seaboard Air Line has not been used. I have filed application through the local agent and he stated that it would be sent. I have only published two schedules, the Southern and the Seaboard Air Line. State whether or not during 1897 or 1898, you have enjoyed a telegraphic frank?"

"I have not, or prior to that time, or at any time."

"State whether during the time mentioned (1897 or 1898) the Southern Express Company dead-headed any articles of any kind for you or Mrs. Wilson?"

"There was a package dead-headed from Richmond, Va., to Raleigh from myself to Mrs. Wilson on Christmas eve or the Thursday before Christmas. The package, I suppose, would weigh four ounces, and a shipment of a box of about sixty pounds at the same time, freight on which was paid."

"During the summer of 1897 did you enjoy any favors, you or Mrs. Wilson, from the Southern Express Company, at Round Knob or Raleigh dead-head?"

"Not to my knowledge. I have had no intimations of such. There was one shipment of watermelons that might be called a discrimination, but not dead-head. I went to the express office here and asked the rate of watermelons. They told me I bought the melons, 15 or 20 and shipped them. When I came back, they stated that they were mistaken in the rate; that it was higher than the rate given. I stated that I could not afford to pay that rate, and that I had already bought the melons. They said, 'Well, I will have to take them, but it will have to come out of me.'"

"Was there any shipment dead-headed or for less than regular rates from the city of Asheville to Round Knob by yourself or your mother?"

"No, sir, there was not."

"State, if at any time the Southern Railway transported a horse for you from Raleigh to Round Knob or from any other point in the State to Round Knob?"

"They shipped a pair of horses, wagon and carriage, but not a horse separate from any other."

"Regular charges?"

"I suppose so. Gave one fare for the round trip. There was a cartload of furniture applied, when going to Round Knob by the Southern for rates upon that shipment of my stuff for the summer to Round Knob and return, and they gave me the rate of one fare for the round trip. That included everything shipped."

"Commissioner Pearson: 'What official of the Southern Railway did you make your application to?'"

"My recollection is that it was Mr. Munson, Division Freight Agent."

"I suppose so. That was my impression at the time." Chairman Caldwell: "During any time last summer did you have a cartload of fertilizer or something shipped to Round Knob?"

"The freight was prepaid by the Fertilizer Company."

"State whether or not the Pullman Palace Car Company carried you at reduced rates or free transportation?"

"I will say to the Commission in this connection that from the time I was elected Commissioner passes were tendered and declined from me until the first of April last, when the additional duties of the Board of Equalization were given, with a six hundred dollar appropriation to pay the expenses of the Board, with a thousand dollar clerk, but no other allowance for expenses. In a consultation with Governor Russell, I asked him how we would meet expenses. He advised me to use a pass. He said he used one himself, and all his family including the guests at the Mansion. I never used a pass except at the earnest request of Governor Russell, in order to save expenses. My total expenses charged to the State were \$9.65, with ten cents due me yet."

"I always opposed the free pass system, and when at the solicitation of Governor Russell I did so, I did it in order to save expenses. He said he did it, got express dead-head, etc., and at his earnest request I accepted passes from that time. I accepted my judgment to save money."

"Mr. Wilson then gave a list of passes furnished by the railroads. These are passes for 1897?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you furnish me with a list you have received for 1898. Have you one for this year from the Pullman Company for 1898. I do not ride on a pass as a Railroad Commissioner but as the Hayseed publisher. I have received but one pass this year as the editor of that paper. I have received one as Railroad Commissioner about the time the matter was before the Court, and that has not been used. A letter received at the same time stated that, owing to the middle in which the Commission was, the pass should be sent, stating that a pass was sent to you gentlemen."

"Commissioner Abbott: In speaking of those tourist rates on household goods, do you know whether the railroads, since you have been a Commissioner, have granted any special rates where hotels were being opened as a summer resort?"

"I have been told by railroad men they did. That did not apply to my case, as I do not travel. I have had transport goods free in such cases, but it was not done in the case of my goods. I have been so informed by railroad men."

"I have been informed that it had been done. I understand it is done on all roads where a hotel is opened on their lines or stop for meals are made, but it was not done for the Round Knob hotel."

"Yes, sir. That was never done to my knowledge at Round Knob hotel. While I was there I did what I could to help my mother, and I think I am in a position to know something about it. Mr. Wilson would like to ask (if it is a pertinent question) whether or not this Commission considers the use of a pass for advertising schedules in a newspaper contrary to the act?"

"Chairman Caldwell: We have not considered the act yet. It is under advisement now, right on that point. There is some difference between the Commissioners as to that."

"In regard to the illegality of using passes, and to accept passes, the bill trying to get an anti-free pass bill passed, and a good part of the session was spent in trying to pass an anti-free pass bill. On February 1st I told Governor Butler that if the case was brought up I should at least make the stand that they were under the act of Railroad Commission, not legal."

"Mr. Wilson asked that his statement at the beginning be amended to read as follows: In these matters under protest, as before the Commission over the office of Railroad Commissioners pending in the courts, and I am denying your rights to seats you now hold; and further, testimony I give might prejudice my case now in the courts."

"The afternoon session Governor Russell appeared before Board and asked to be sworn that he might make a statement touching Mr. Wilson's testimony during the morning. He said: 'I understand that the Commission that I understand that Mr. S. O. Wilson has stated that he consulted with the Governor, as to taking passes from the railroads himself and other Commissioners, and that the Governor advised him to take the passes. This statement is true. He stated to me that the railroads had been in the habit of giving passes to the Commissioners, and that they were willing to do so in the future, and that by their taking passes the State would save about \$2,000, that is, that there was an appropriation of \$2,000 to pay the expenses of the Railroad Commission, and that these expenses were mostly in traveling over the railroads, and to accept passes, the State was saved the bulk of this expense. I told him that if the railroads were willing to bear this expense by granting passes, I saw no objection to their accepting them. This is all.'"

"After this Mr. Wilson completed his testimony, and the Commission proceeded with its routine work."

"After reading the report of Mr. Wilson's testimony Gov. Russell again came before the Commission and dictated the following statement supplementing the one made an hour before: 'Since the above was testified to, I have read the evidence of ex-Commissioner O. S. Wilson, and I see that he says that he would not have taken passes except for my earnest request.' I made no earnest request, but simply told him that I thought it would be as well to save the State the money. Again he says that I said that I was getting passes for guests at the Governor's Mansion. This is false. He did not say that I could get passes any time for guests, and for pretty much anything else that I wanted, and that I could take all the railroads offered, it would probably be worth \$1,000 a year to me."

"I will add that when I advised him to take passes and took them myself, it was not understood, so indeed, contended by anybody, so far as I know, that our railroad law prohibited free passes."

"Reduction of Passenger Rates. Notice was served on all roads of the State to show cause why the present passenger rates on them should not be reduced. This is to be done on the 25th, 26th and 27th."

"It was on motion of Chairman Caldwell that this was ordered, the following resolution being introduced by him and voted for by the other Commissioners: 'Resolved, That notice be served upon the Raleigh and Gaston railroad, the Raleigh and Augusta railroad, the Seaboard and Roanoke railroad, and the Georgia, Carolina and Northern railroad, from Monroe, N. C., to the South Carolina line, to show cause before the Railroad Commission, at its office in Raleigh, N. C., on the 25th day of January, 1898, why the fares for the transportation of passengers over said roads should not be reduced.'

"Resolved, That notice be served upon the Wilmington and Weldon railroad, the Petersburg railroad, the Norfolk and Carolina railroad, the Wilson and Fayetteville railroad, the Tarboro branch, to show cause before the R. R. Commission, at its office in Raleigh, N. C., on the 25th day of January, 1898, why the fares for the transportation of passengers over said roads shall not be reduced."

"Resolved, That notice be served upon the Western North Carolina railroad, the Atlantic, Tennessee and Ohio railroad, the North Carolina railroad, the Piedmont railroad, the Atlantic and Charlotte Air Line, the Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta railroad, the North Western North Carolina railroad, to show cause before the Railroad Commission, at its office in Raleigh, N. C., on the 27th day of January, 1898, why the fares for the transportation of passengers over said roads should not be reduced."

"In the hearing, if not concluded upon the day appointed, the same shall be continued from day to day until disposed of."

"Notice of similar import will be served upon others at such time as the Commission may designate."

"Rates of Fertilizers. Mr. Caldwell also introduced the following resolution reducing the rate on fertilizers, when shipped in open lots, if it is loaded and unloaded by shipper and consignee, the railroad only having to transport the loaded car: 'Resolved, That on and after the 20th day of January, 1898, the rate on fertilizers, when shipped in open lots, if it is loaded and unloaded by shipper and consignee, the railroad only having to transport the loaded car, be reduced sixteen and two-thirds per cent. upon all railroads within the State. This to apply only to car load lots.'

"Although this resolution was finally passed unanimously, there was some discussion of it before the vote was taken. Dr. Abbott favored a 15 per cent. reduction, saying he was convinced that this would be reasonable and would not do such a reduction would put fertilizers in class 'O' of freights."

"Mr. Pearson, on the other hand, thought 10 per cent. the proper reduction; that this was the rate in Georgia; that shipments were always made in closed lots, and that railroads had only to haul and not handle as in other freights. Besides this such a reduction would enable the fertilizer factories in the State to compete with foreign ones. A 10 per cent. reduction being just one-sixth, would be more easily called for by the farmers and Ohio railroads. The old rate is about 25 per cent. lower than the uniform rate. The people of Statesville, Morganton and perhaps one or two other points asked its restoration."

"The following fourth class postmaster in charge has been appointed in North Carolina: Bayboro, Sheldon Sawyer; Middleburg, Brutus Young; Pantego, Major J. Whitley; Patterson, J. M. Sherrill; Spear, S. B. Braswell."

"The Senate last week confirmed the nomination of E. C. Duncan to be Collector of Internal Revenue for the fourth district of North Carolina. The corporators are: W. S. Forbes and J. D. Patton, of Richmond, Va., who hold \$68,400 of the stock; C. B. Keeble, of Martinsville, Va., \$15,000; L. D. Sparger, \$6,000; J. H. and S. W. Sparger, \$300 each."

"The Iron Mountain and Texas Pacific Rys from Memphis run elegant reclining chair cars, also day coaches, with the latest improvements, Arkansas and Texas points without charge. If you expect to make a trip to any of the Western States, it will be to your interest to drop me a line. For maps, books and pamphlets on Arkansas and Texas, address: L. E. EXLANDER, Traveling Passenger Agent, 103 Reed House, Chattanooga, Tenn."

LATEST REPORTS FROM CUBA.

Cubans are Starving and Immediate Relief Needed—Hundreds Join the Insurgents.

A BOLD BRIBERY SCHEME.

Capitalists Hatch a Scheme to Secure Dominant Interest in Cuba by Bribery, General News Notes and War Reports.

The insurgents of Pinar del Rio have a step in the right direction. They have secured 100,000 tobacco plants, the property of the mayor of Artemisa.

In the district of Camajuani, province of Santa Clara, the insurgents have destroyed 500,000 tobacco plants and have burned about 4,000 tons of cane.

At Matanzas seventy-one persons died, of whom twenty-two were starved to death.

In Holguin, a town of 5,000 inhabitants, last year 268 persons died, many of them losing their lives through starvation.

Hundreds Join Insurgents. In Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo hundreds of men have joined the insurgents from the undefended towns. The insurgents are obliging all men to join them.

During the last ten days in various skirmishes the insurgents, according to the Spanish reports, lost 87 men killed, while the troops captured ten prisoners and 47 rifles. In addition, 97 insurgents surrendered.

The troops in these skirmishes lost 23 private soldiers and lost six officers and 68 private wounded.

The insurgents have burned about 1,500 tons of cane on the plantation of Toledo, near Habana.

The Captain-General of Porto Rico resigned because he considered autonomy to be disastrous to Spanish sovereignty.

One hundred and eighty-five persons who had been exiled to the Island of Pines and were supposed to be conspirators, have been released, but they are really men of bad character and 'manigos.'

Important Engagement. At the moment this dispatch is filed it is reported that an important engagement has taken place between the Spaniards and the insurgents under General Rabi in the District of Manzanillo. It is further reported that the Spaniards killed three hundred men killed, while the Spaniards are said to have lost one hundred and forty men killed or wounded. No further details have yet been received.

An account of the concentration of the insurgent forces a few leagues distant from Habana, General Valderrama left here with 800 troops, to engage the enemy.

As several chiefs of the Spanish columns have been killed, and others are sick or wounded. The latter in the future must be well cared for, and sent to the military hospitals. The Captain-General has also issued decrees supplying the planters and farmers, for their defense, with the shooting of prisoners, the invalided soldiers sent back to Spain.

The Cubans are Still Starving. NEW YORK, Jan. 13.—The telegrams sent by the Central Committee for the relief of the starving Cubans to the governors of all the states and territories, asking for the appointment of committees to collect money and supplies, have been returned to the Central Committee by fourteen governors to-day.

They announced that active relief measures had begun or was about to be started. The Governors of Virginia and Texas, among the Southern governors who have been appealed to for help. Replies from others are expected at an early date.

A Syndicate's Conspiracy. MADRID, Jan. 13.—'Correspondencia de Espana' to-day prints a letter from a 'Prominent Member of the Spanish colony in New York' giving details of a conspiracy by a group of American capitalists to secure a dominant interest in Cuba by a wholesale bribery.

The writer affirms the intention of the syndicate to distribute \$1,000,000 in bribes.

Fifty thousand he says, were offered certain statesmen the other day, and the support of a New York newspaper secured for \$100,000. Senators and Congressmen quoted at lower figures. Among others approached is a certain Cuban General who was offered \$250,000.

Klondikers 'Have Troubles of Their Own.' The real difficulty in connection with prospecting at Klondike, is not so much the trouble of staking out good paying claims, as it is to get into the country at all, or to keep there. The narrow mountain passes leading into British Columbia are so completely glutted with human traffic that the overflow at the foothills of hundreds of thousands of prospectors, and the consequent maelstrom of carts, sleds, and provisions in the utmost possible confusion, form a scene absolutely unique in the history of gold discoveries, a scene appalling in its combination of misery, pathos, human ambition, and consequent suffering.—From 'Great Gold Discoveries,' in Demorest's Family Magazine for January.

The folly and prejudice is frequently shown by people who prefer to suffer for years rather than an advertised remedy. The millions who have no such notions, take Ayer's Sarsaparilla for blood diseases, and are cured. So much for common sense.

Consult Your Bowels With Care. Constipation is a serious ailment. It is caused by morbid men and steam ploughs are used. Cattle raising is the chief business.

THAT FACTIONAL FACTION.

Resolutions Passed by the Memphis Conference Faction—THEY DECLINE CHAIRMAN BUTLER'S PROPOSITION.

They Do Not Agree to Abide by the Action of the National Committee—Do They Want Harmony?—They are Bringing Discredit on the Referendum.

The faction claiming to represent the Nashville conference have held their meeting in St. Louis. Up to the hour of going to press all we know about their doings is the Associated Press dispatches. Of course we don't know whether this is correct or not. It is as follows:

ST. LOUIS, Mo., Jan. 13.—With but two exceptions the conference of Populists who came here yesterday from twenty different States at the call of the national organization committee appointed at the Nashville convention, is made up of representatives of the middle-of-the-road wing of the party. These exceptions are George F. Washburn of Boston, and Editor Farris, of Joliet, Ill., both members of the national executive committee, of which Senator Marion Butler, of North Carolina, is chairman. Although they both profess fealty to the policy of non-fusion, they are looked upon with suspicion by the out-and-out middle-of-the-roads, and are being watched closely to see what their intentions in coming to the conference are.

Chairman Butler has failed to in any way recognize the organization committee. This action on the part of Chairman Butler, who was a strong advocate of fusion with the Democrats at the last election, will, so Chairman Butler declares, soot the organization committee to take independent action as to the future policy of the party, irrespective of the national committee.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., Jan. 14.—The Organization Committee appointed by the Nashville Conference faction of the Populist Party, which met here yesterday, has issued an address to the people of the United States, in part as follows:

THE ADDRESS. 'The fusion movement consummated at St. Louis in July, 1896, and the inexcusable treatment of our candidate for vice-President in the campaign following, which met here yesterday, has issued an address to the people of the United States, in part as follows:

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AN ARKANSAS TORNADO.

Death and Destruction in the Storm's Path—Hundreds of Homes Destroyed—Loss Estimated at One Million Dollars.

Fort Smith, Ark., Jan. 12.—Two scores of human lives and upward of one million worth of property were destroyed by a terrific storm burst upon this city a few minutes past 11 o'clock last night. The storm struck near the National Cemetery and tore its way through the entire city, leaving its path marked by death and desolation.

Men, women and children were awakened without a moment's warning to meet death by falling walls or in the flames which engulfed many of the wrecked buildings.

The scene following the first terrific crash of the storm was one of awful grandeur. Business blocks, handsome mansions, hotels, and humble cottages were raised and scattered in shapeless mounds. Several of the wrecked houses were so badly and the inflammable timbers burned furiously.

The city was crowded with rural visitors, many of whom were sleeping at boarding houses unregistered. For this reason the number of victims who perished in Fort Smith last night may never be definitely known.

The storm struck the city near the national cemetery and swept through the heart of the town.

News from outside points is not yet at hand, but rumors of great damage as far south as Alma have reached here, it being reported that a number of persons were killed near that place.

The citizens relief committee has \$10,000 in hand for relief suffering. Business is practically abandoned all over the city and men of all classes are assisting in clearing the debris.

MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD FOLLY.

Why Mr. Pomeroy has Gotten Ahead of the Name and Company.

The National Republican edited by Mark W. A. Hitchkins, who has been a reformer since the year 1850, voted for Peter Cooper for President on the Greenback ticket, in an editorial saying:

'The disorganizers in the Nashville Conference steering committee propose holding a meeting at St. Louis on the 12th, 13th, 14th, to consider and plan for the nomination of a Presidential ticket in 1898. If the men engaged in this move are honest they could do some good by their meeting for the final defeat of the reformers of the day to desire. Eltweed Pomeroy, a member of their committee at Newark, N. J., refused to participate in the meeting, and after giving his reasons for opposing a nomination two years before the election he says: 'I have always called myself a middle-of-the-road Populist, and will not vote for any man who last year at St. Louis, but so much abuse and denunciation has come from the ranks of the reformers that I think that I shall have to drop that name.' All earnest Populists are coming to see as does Mr. Pomeroy they are refusing to support discord.'

NEWSPAPERS ATTACKED.

Army Officers Lead the Mob—Troops Guard the Printing Offices.

HAVANA, Jan. 12.—At 10 o'clock this morning, about a hundred army officers, increased by the violent attacks made by some of the principal officers of the Spanish army in Cuba, went to the printing office of the daily journals 'Discussion and El Concentrado and began smashing the windows and destroying the printing outfit, as well as cutting the employees.

Gen. Salasno will deal most severely with the leaders of the outbreak. To-night troops are guarding the printing offices.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 13.—Late this afternoon the first news of the day came to the State Department from United States Consul Gen. Lee, who telegraphed that everything was very quiet in Havana to-day, and that there was no cause for apprehension of trouble.

MOODY ON SUNDAY LABOR.

There are Certain Things That Must be Done on the Lord's Day.

'There are one or two principles which apply directly to the frequent difficulties which beset the Christian young man,' writes Dwight L. Moody of 'A Young Man's Religious Life' in the Ladies' Home Journal. 'In Sunday labor there is a certain amount of work that must be done on Sunday, both for the benefit and health of a community. But it is necessary that it should be dispatched as quickly as possible, and not be used as an excuse for unnecessary work.'

'When the Lord ordained a day of rest it was for man's best interests, physically, mentally and spiritually, and any man who barter the day of rest to gratify the selfish interests of another is always the loser. Man needs for the welfare of his soul, as well as his body, at least one day in seven to devote to its special needs. I know, from personal experience, that no man can work seven days in the week, not even religious work, and to do the best work he is capable of, either for God or man. And I have no right to take from any neighbor what I prize myself.'

Largest Cargo of Cotton. The British steamer Ranza cleared Savannah, Ga., with 18,720 bales of cotton, weighing 3,835,855 pounds, and valued at \$24,932. This is the largest cargo of cotton ever shipped from an Atlantic port, and is over 7,000 bales more than was ever shipped from this port on any other vessel.

The administration's appeals to help Cuban did not meet with a hearty response from the American people. It can only win their endorsement when they help the Cubans help themselves to win their independence.—Atlanta Journal Dem.

The sugar-coating, which makes Ayer's Pills so easy to take, dissolves immediately on entering the stomach, and so permits the full strength and benefit of the medicine to be promptly communicated. Ask your druggist for Ayer's Almanac, just out.

Baldness is either hereditary or caused by sickness, mental exhaustion, wearing tight fitting hats, and by over-work and trouble. Hall's Renewer will prevent it.

They were 74 members of the committee represented by members present or proxies and 100 who favored a joint meeting of the National

WHAT CONGRESS IS DOING.

The House Concludes Civil Service Debate.

THE SENATE ON HAWAIIAN ANNEXATION.

The Investigation Bill Passed—A Stronger President—Apparition Bill in the House—North Carolina Nominations and Conventions—Other Matters.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 15.—The Senate has given most of its time to the consideration of the Hawaiian annexation treaty during the week. It will probably be some time yet before a vote can be had. The friends of the treaty claim the requisite two-thirds for ratification.

The House on last Tuesday passed the Legislative Judicial and Executive Appropriation Bill, which had been under consideration since some time before the holidays, and one paragraph of which, that relating to appropriation for Civil Service Commission, provoked such a long discussion. After all the talk indulged in however by the anti-civil service Congressmen